

to assure that we have safety on our highways, and that we are going to be evenhanded.

I really think what we are talking about is process. We are really talking about when we come to that determination. Many of us are concerned that if we don't talk about exactly what is going to be the end result, maybe it is not going to come out that way. But I think we have the ability to talk across the aisle.

I am certainly supportive of the stricter definitions that are in the bill. It is certainly better than what the House passed, which abrogates the responsibility under NAFTA.

I do not think we are very far apart. For all the heat that is being generated, I think we are very close to the language in the Murray amendment with the language the Department of Transportation is seeking. I think we are very close to coming to a conclusion. I hope we can agree in due time on that final language, or at least a process to get there. I think we are talking process, even though it seems there is a lot of heat being generated on the issue.

I am going to call up an amendment at the appropriate time, No. 1133, that will assure we have the ability to weigh trucks at a crossing where at least 250 trucks a year go across, where there will be commercial scales available to weigh trucks.

One of the differences between Mexico and the United States is weight limits. There is also a difference between Canada and the United States on this issue.

This is an important issue because, of course, our highways are maintained based on our weight limits. The heavier a truck is, the more wear and tear there is on our highways. So we do need to make sure that we have a system, once we agree on what the weight limits are going to be, to check those weights and assure that everyone is meeting the requirements.

So I am hoping my amendment No. 1133 will be adopted in due course. Senator DOMENICI is a cosponsor of my amendment. We are two Senators from border States who understand very much the wear and tear on highways. I would also say that the bill that is before us, thanks to Senator MURRAY and Senator SHELBY, has enough money to equip these stations.

Another action that the House took was to wipe out the money that would allow us to inspect these trucks. The House just went into a hole and hid. We cannot do that. The bill before us that has been laid out by the appropriations subcommittee does have good regulations. There should be some changes in the language, but I think we are close to coming to that agreement. And it does have the money for the inspection stations. I want to make sure that included in that agreement also are

weigh stations, if there are going to be any number of trucks that go through at any one time.

We have lived with the 20-mile commercial zone in Texas, which has the most border crossings. Texas has 1,200 miles of border of the 2,000-mile border with Mexico. So we do have the most crossings, of course. We have the most highways. We have had a 20-mile commercial zone that was established by NAFTA in the interim period while we were working on these regulations.

There have been some problems within these commercial zones. Many people who live on the border are very concerned about seeing trucks that do not have the clear safety standards that American trucks are required to have. Only 2 of the 27 U.S.-Mexico border crossings are currently properly equipped with infrastructure and manpower to enforce the safety regulations. That is why I have worked so hard with Senator MURRAY and Senator SHELBY on the committee to restore the President's request for border safety activities.

This bill does have \$103 million dedicated to border safety activities. So most certainly, I think we are on the right track to making sure that families who are traveling on American highways are not going to have to worry about substandard trucks from any other country being on that highway.

We agree that we should have agreements with Mexico and that Mexico should be comfortable in that they are not being discriminated against. That is not even a question, although it has certainly been a question in the Senate debate.

I hear from my border constituents. I talk to people in El Paso and Laredo and McAllen and Harlingen. They are the most concerned of all about the trucks they are seeing in this 20-mile commercial zone, where we have Mexican trucks that are legal as NAFTA provided in this early transition time. It is those people who are complaining the most about Mexican trucks that might not meet the same safety standards.

We have had a lot of debate. It is legitimate debate. But I do not think anyone in this Senate Chamber intends to violate NAFTA. I do not think anyone in this Senate Chamber intends for us to have unsafe trucks on American highways. So if we can all agree on those two points, I think it is time for us to come to an agreement on the process.

Let's have strict safety requirements; let's have a process by which we can inspect Mexican trucks, where Mexican authorities can inspect U.S. trucks that want to go into Mexico, and where we can have a certification process that requires that every truck must be inspected; but if it is inspected at a site before it crosses the border,

and it gets a sticker, then we will agree that that truck can go through. But we also must have the facilities for those trucks that are not inspected and will not have that certification sticker.

We have to make sure that we provide the money for those inspection stations. This bill has the money. I want to make sure that weighing stations are as much a part of those border safety inspection facilities as are the checks that we would make for brakes, for fatigue, for driver qualifications, for good tires, and all of the other things that we would expect if we had our families in a car going on a freeway. We would hope that we would be safe from encroachment by a truck that did not meet the standards that we have come to expect in our country.

So I hope very much that we can come to a reasonable and expedited conclusion. I think we are all going for the same goal. I think there is no place in this debate for pointing fingers or name-calling. We do not need that. We need good standards, good regulations for the safety of our trucks, and to treat Mexican trucks and United States trucks in a mutually fair way. That is what we are trying to do.

I want to work with all of the parties involved. I think we have a good start in this bill, and I think we will be able to perfect this language in conference. I think everyone has shown the willingness to do that. I hope we can roll up our sleeves and pass what I think is a very good Transportation Appropriations Committee product. I think it is a good bill. It certainly adequately funds the major things that we need to do. With some changes in the Mexican truck language, which the sponsors of the legislation are willing to do, I think we can have a bill that the President will be proud to sign. That is my goal.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CANTWELL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, JULY 27, 2001

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until the hour of 10 a.m. on Friday, July 27. I further ask that on Friday, immediately following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date and the morning hour be deemed to have expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day,

and the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 2299, the Transportation appropriations bill, and that the time remaining under cloture be counted as if the Senate had remained in session continuously since cloture was invoked earlier this afternoon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GRAMM. Reserving the right to object. Posing a question to the Chair, the time that is being used this evening will not count against any individual Senator's time; is that right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. GRAMM. I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, the majority leader has asked that I announce that there will be no more rollcall votes tonight, but there are expected to be several tomorrow starting in the morning.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I rise to support an amendment to increase the Coast Guard's funding by \$46.1 million. Unfortunately, under the funding levels in the pending bill, the Coast Guard would be forced to reduce routine operations by 20 percent. The increase provided by our amendment will address the Coast Guard's current readiness needs and raise the Coast Guard's law enforcement capabilities to the levels enacted in the budget resolution.

The past two national defense authorization bills mandated pay raises, new medical benefits, recruiting and retention incentives, and other entitlements that exceeded the funds appropriated during the consideration of the regular Transportation appropriations bills. Compounding this, the Coast Guard has had to face rising energy costs, aging assets, and missions that grow increasingly complex. To pay for these increases the Coast Guard has had to dip into its operational accounts resulting in reduced law enforcement patrols.

Without the funding authorized in this amendment, the Coast Guard will

again be forced to reduce its level of operations. These routine operations are extremely important. As you know, the Coast Guard is a branch of the Armed Forces, but on a day-to-day basis, they are a multi-mission agency. Last year alone, the Coast Guard responded to over 40,000 calls for assistance, assisted \$1.4 billion in property, and saved 3,355 lives.

These brave men and women risk their lives to defend our borders from drugs, illegal immigrants, and other national security threats. And in 2000, the Coast Guard seized a record 132,000 pounds of cocaine and 50,000 pounds of marijuana through successful drug interdiction missions. They also stopped 4,210 illegal migrants from reaching our shores. They conducted patrols to protect our valuable fisheries stocks and they responded to more than 11,000 pollution incidents.

On April 6 Senior DEWINE, myself, and 10 of the colleagues offered an amendment to the budget resolution which was adopted by the Senate that addressed this very issue. That amendment increased funding for the Coast Guard by \$250 million.

The amendment that we are offering today, will go a long way toward repairing the fundamental problems facing the Coast Guard. It will increase funding by \$46.1 million in fiscal year 2002 so that the Coast Guard will not need to reduce its routine operations.

Now, during the drafting of the fiscal year 2002 Transportation appropriations bill, Senators MURRAY and SHELBY had a daunting task in crafting a bill that would cover a wide range of priorities within the allocations provided to their subcommittee. Fortunately, they both recognize the importance of the Coast Guard to their home States and the Nation and their bill provides a significant increase above the President's budget request accordingly. However, based upon the Coast Guard's estimates, this increase will not eliminate the need for operational cutbacks.

The \$46.1 million increase we are asking for in this amendment is well below the \$250 million the Senate agreed to in April, but the Coast Guard has assured us that they have taken a careful look at the funding allocations provided in this bill and that this small increase is all that is needed to restore the Coast Guard's operations and readiness. This will allow the Coast Guard to address an alarming spare parts shortage, maintain operations, and take care of other basic readiness problems.

By supporting this amendment, my colleagues will be saying that it is unacceptable to reduce these critical law enforcement missions and supplying the Coast Guard with the resources and tools they need to fulfill the mandates Congress has given them. It provides the Coast Guard with the foundation needed to do its job.

This is a bipartisan amendment, and I thank Senators GRAHAM and DEWINE for their efforts on behalf of the Coast Guard. This is noncontroversial amendment, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period for morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for not to exceed 10 minutes each, and further, of course, this time, under the previous unanimous consent agreement, will be charged against the postcloture time that is now pending.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GRAMM. Madam President, reserving the right to object, may I ask a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. GRAMM. I would be perfectly happy to go to morning business, but I want to be assured that tonight we are not going to go back on the bill.

Mr. REID. No. The only thing we are going to do is wrapup, and it will have no bearing whatsoever on the legislation.

Mr. GRAMM. With that understanding, I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NAVAJO CODE TALKERS' CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, for those who toil in the clandestine world of national security, where the dictates of secrecy cloak heroes actions in vaults full of files marked with code words and warnings, there are precious few opportunities to stand before bright lights and listen to applause. Today, a group of men were honored who kept their secret from 1942 until 1968, when their talents and contributions in winning the war in the Pacific were finally declassified. Today was their turn in the sun, as the President awarded the original 29 Navajo Code Talkers the Congressional Gold Medal.

Now the world knows how these men gave the U.S. military a decisive edge in communications during the war in the Pacific theater and elsewhere. Their presence at Iwo Jima, at Guadalcanal, and throughout the Pacific provided U.S. military units with secure communications and the element of surprise that allowed U.S. forces to overwhelm dug-in Japanese units and win some of the bloodiest battles in World War II. The Navajo Code Talkers' unique contribution to the nation's security can be counted in those victories and in the number of servicemen who survived the war and returned home to their families.

The story behind the development of the Navajo Code Talkers is fascinating.